

Facilities Assessment Subcommittee (“FAS”) Guidance Memorandum

General Notes:

1. This document is meant to provide considerations for FAS presentations. It is not an all-inclusive list, nor does it represent requirements of the District and its consultants, or all of the MSBA’s requirements.
2. The MSBA requests that Districts submit a complete PowerPoint of the FAS presentation with the Preferred Schematic Report.

The Role of the OPM and Designer:

1. Encourage the District to start the Educational Program as soon as possible. Ideally there will be a first draft completed for the Designer’s review by the time the Designer joins the project team.
2. Encourage the District to plan the shift to a different instructional approach, where applicable. This can take years and requires substantial professional development as well as the support of school and District leadership.
3. Encourage the District to plan for student transitions, which may include the transition to a new building and in many cases to a new school community (e.g., teachers, classmates, administrators, families). This should also begin early.
4. Encourage the District to review the [Educational Program Requirements](#) document and [Sample Educational Programs](#) on the MSBA website.
5. Encourage the District, as it develops its Educational Program, to include staff who can share hands-on, day-to-day operational perspectives (e.g., the curriculum director, principal, Special Education director, other staff).
6. Review the District’s daily course schedule and assist the District in evaluating whether sufficient time is allotted for hands-on, set-up-intensive courses such as Science. If the District is considering changing its schedule, assist the District in presenting this information clearly.
7. Assist the District in understanding how flexible spaces can be used to support multiple programmatic needs and can increase the efficiency of the Preferred Schematic.
8. Proof-read the District’s Educational Program. Check for typos, grammar, clarity, content (check against the [Educational Program Requirements](#) document), and specificity.
9. As part of the updated Educational Program included in the District’s Preferred Schematic Report, supplement the District’s Educational Program by providing the design response, including desired features and/or layout considerations (refer to the [Educational Program Requirements](#) document).

10. Share with the District examples of previous projects that provided cost-effective, efficient schools that maximized multiple uses in spaces providing for long-term flexibility.

FAS Presentation Considerations (Discussion):

1. Focus the presentation exclusively on the District's Preferred Schematic.
2. Focus the presentation on the ways the architecture has been developed to support and reinforce the Educational Program prepared by the District.
3. Begin with an opening statement of the overall vision/concept of the proposed project so the FAS members understand the District's approach to developing its Preferred Schematic. Provide corresponding slides as appropriate.
4. Have the District or Designer identify and summarize the following information from the Educational Program, as applicable:
 - a. Overview of the overall program including any specialty programs
 - b. Proposed changes in grades or consolidation of facilities and describe how these changes impact the Preferred Schematic
 - c. Proposed changes in teaching methodology or schedule
 - d. Key adjacency requirements
 - e. Flexible or multiple use spaces
 - f. Distribution of Special Education spaces and any programs that require co-location
 - g. Outdoor learning spaces
 - h. Ongoing and future professional development efforts to prepare faculty and staff to occupy and take full advantage of the Preferred Schematic
5. The MSBA recommends that one or two District representatives responsible for developing the Educational Program also attend the meeting to provide additional context or clarification as needed.

FAS Presentation Considerations (Visuals):

1. Ensure that graphics are clear, labeled, and legible.
2. Include a north arrow and key/legend on slides with plans and sections.
3. Begin presentation with a map of the town/city/regional school district and the facility's proposed location relative to the public school buildings and various neighborhoods within the District.
4. Document site conditions that have informed the location of the building on the site including:
 - a. Solar orientation
 - b. Topography

- i. Provide a site section that illustrates how the Preferred Schematic sits on the site and how the proposed location impacts access and circulation
 - ii. If the site is sloped, provide site and building sections that identify different entrances and key programs at different levels
 - c. Wetlands/rivers/streams
 - d. Drainage
 - e. Resiliency and water control measures
 - f. Traffic
 - g. Site ownership
 - h. Areas subject to conservation commission review
 - i. Any other constraints or assets that are located on the selected site
5. Show the transition from the site to the building. Identify any buffers separating traffic and parking from building areas and indicate the number of parking spaces provided.
6. Show the ground floor plan in the site plan in order to clearly illustrate the connections between exterior and interior spaces.
7. Identify proposed future expansion on the site plan.
8. Show outdoor learning spaces described in the Educational Program on the site plan and describe how the location and the vision of the area fits the proposed educational use.
9. Provide massing diagrams and exterior views of the building that show the relationship of the building to the site and to its surroundings (e.g., neighboring houses, urban density, woods, open fields). The diagrams and exterior views should also illustrate how parking, landscape, play areas, fields, and loading docks relate to the building and the site.
10. Provide a concept diagram or simple axonometric that shows the relationship of the programs, parts, and volumes. This is especially important if two schools are being combined.
11. If the project is an addition/renovation, provide an axonometric drawing that clearly differentiates the addition areas from the existing areas that will be renovated.
12. Show the envisioned character of the building exterior and key interior spaces. Using precedent images can be effective for this purpose. (Be sure to credit designers of precedent images if you take this approach.)
13. Show the distribution of Special Education spaces, and as noted above, indicate any programmatic reasons for co-located or specially-located spaces.
14. Demonstrate how the building could be organized in multiple ways. (i.e., demonstrate the design's future flexibility.)
15. The presentation should conclude with presenting the preliminary costs of the options studied, using the Preliminary Design Pricing Table format as submitted in the Preferred Schematic Report.

16. The presentation should be in PowerPoint and consist of no more than 15 slides. Please ensure slides are numbered.

Common Topics in FAS Discussions:

1. Sustainability:
 - a. East-West classroom orientation for best solar efficiency and cost impact to projects with classrooms oriented in a North-South direction.
 - b. Assessment of water flow from elevated areas of the site to lower areas including neighboring homes, roads, and off-site structures.
 - c. Loss of water-absorption areas caused by the introduction of impervious surfaces to the site (e.g., large building footprints, parking lots, black-top play areas) and ways to mitigate such loss.
 - d. Sources of information for flood zones beyond current flood-zone maps.
2. Accessibility:
 - a. Universal Design approach to entry and circulation through the building and site.
 - b. Protection from adverse weather conditions at building entries for individuals with mobility impairments. (e.g. including sheltered access into the building)
 - c. Braille and large-print instructions positioned at appropriate heights for use by wheelchair-bound, young, and short individuals.
 - d. Assistive listening technology throughout the facility, including in non-instructional spaces.
 - e. Benefits of at least two sinks in each grade K-5 classroom, one of which should be compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”).
 - f. Importance of designing the gymnasium so that it appropriately supports Adaptive PE (e.g. protects users from excessive noise, visual distraction, and physical harm).
3. Outdoor Learning Spaces:
 - a. Year-round maintenance, including care and use during non-school times of the year, and optimization for local climate.
 - b. Involvement of custodial and maintenance staff in the design and care of outdoor gardening spaces, especially at the elementary level.
 - c. Courtyard use and maintenance for snow removal and routine care as described in the Educational Program.
 - d. Access and navigational time for persons with mobility impairments.
4. Interior Learning Spaces:
 - a. Multiple use and long-term flexibility of performance facilities:
 - i. Combinations of dining/cafeteria/gymnasium space with appropriate sound amplification that can accommodate large assemblies.
 - ii. Educational benefits of including small auditorium-like spaces rather than large, theatrically equipped auditoria.
 - b. Staffing and maintenance of one or more maker spaces. (Refer to the [Review and Recommendations of Best Practices for K-12 STEM Learning Spaces](#) report)
 - c. Program adjacencies and flexibility of spaces over time.
 - d. Distribution of Special Education spaces.